

The Growing Grayer Family – Part 3

So far, we have only discussed one of William Henry Grayer and Mary Elizabeth (Eliza) Green's children, but there are still several more to go. We've discussed William Jr., so the next child is George Albert who was born circa 1867 in Colchester South. He was an unmarried farmer and in his 1910 obituary was described as a well-known resident of the township. George's sister Maria/Moriah was born circa 1868 in Colchester South and passed on October 6, 1884.

Significantly more information is available for the next child of William Sr. and Mary Elizabeth (Eliza). James Hatfield Grayer was born on August 27, 1871 in Colchester South. He grew up on the original homestead of William Grayer located on Gore Road in Colchester South and attended school on Dunn Road. In 1891 he married Mercilla (Mercy) Clingman in Colchester South. Mercilla was born on September 9, 1870 in Colchester South and was the daughter of James Milton Clingman and Nancy Ann Hatfield. It is ironic that Mercilla married a man named James Hatfield Grayer, considering her father's first name was also James and her mother's maiden name was Hatfield. What a coincidence. Mercilla's father James was the son of Mary Ann Atkinson and Gabriel Clingman (the son of Samuel Gabriel Clingman) and was born in 1843 in Greenup County, Kentucky. He escaped enslavement with his parents via the Underground Railroad circa 1848. Mercilla's mother Nancy was born on September 22, 1852 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and was the daughter of Charles A. Hatfield and Mary (Mercy) Ann Conway (Mary was the daughter of George A. Conway and Nancy Hill). Mercilla's parents, James and Nancy, married on January 12, 1868.

Sadly, Mercilla passed away unexpectedly in Detroit in 1918 while visiting her daughter Livinia/Lavena. According to her obituary, "she went to Detroit to visit five weeks ago, in good

spirits. An abscess of the jaw developed, and blood poisoning set in which quickly brought the end.” Following Mercilla’s passing, James married a widow named Jenny Grayson on January 7, 1924 in Essex, but she passed away only a few years later in 1926. Jenny was born circa 1878 in Windsor and was the daughter of Stephen Holland and Helen Bartlett.

James and Mercilla had four children, but sadly two of their children passed away in infancy. They were Charles Amos who was born on June 20, 1891 in Colchester and James Arthur who was born on September 24, 1892, also in Colchester. The two surviving children of James and Mercilla were Forrest Alberta who was born on November 20, 1893 and Livinia/Lavena (mentioned above) who was born on May 29, 1895. Livinia married William Leonidas Jackson on December 14, 1918 in Chicago. William Jackson was born on October 30, 1879 in York (Toronto) and was the son of John Henry Jackson and Charlotte Josephine Williams. Livinia and William had no children and, at one time, Livinia worked as a cosmetic sales person.

What we publish is not a complete history of any family and is based on the documents that are available. We welcome photos and information to fill in the gaps. See you next week for Part 4 where we will discuss Livinia’s brother Forrest and other Grayer family members.